



Medical Research Council

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Dr. P. Siekevitz,
President,
The New York Academy of Sciences,
2 East 63rd Street,
New York,
N.Y. 10021, U.S.A.

Dear Phil,

Thank you for your letter of 26 March. I am not sure what you would like from me. I have written two articles (Nature (1968) 219, 808-810 and Nature (1974) 248, 787-788) setting out Rosalind Franklin's contribution to the solution of the structure of DNA, and I think everyone agrees she played a major role in it. We also now know that she was closer to the solution than many people realised, but, characteristically, didn't complain at being "beaten" since there never was a "race".

However, if she is to be honoured, it should be not so much as a "woman of science" but for her crucial contributions in sorting out the A and the B forms, establishing that the phosphates were on the outside and determining the helical parameters which were used by Crick and Watson in their model.

The fact is Rosalind was never an active feminist, but simply evoked or created respect in her own right as a person, and I think she might have found some of the present attitudes somewhat distasteful. There is also, inevitably, a fair amount of discussion as to whether she would have solved the structure on her own. One can only guess, but my view, as stated, is that she would have done so eventually, though not with the characteristic flourish of Crick. It is sometimes said that she made a strategical mistake in pursuing the A form, and so on, but I think again one is only saying that she wasn't Francis Crick.

It is clear that she was an outstandingly good experimental scientist with acute powers of observation and a clear powerful mind, but not of the highly imaginative variety. I think she was of the first rank and, doubtless, had she lived, would have accumulated many honours.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'A. Klug', written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

A. Klug